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By-Lierheimer, Alvin P.

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The teacher certification scheme, which is built on the student's completion of prescribed courses rather than on his teaching abilities, is in need of change due to the increasing complexity and work load of the teacher, differentiated staffing patterns, new teacher behavior assessment techniques (such as observational records) which make clear the lack of objective criteria for assessing teaching performance and interpersonal competence, and the increasing pressure to accommodate local certification practices to federal bureaucratic funding decisions. Differentiation of roles in teaching (and in administration), developed and tested in a strengthened school-college combine, can create a flexible structure that will enable the beginning teacher to teach at his own level of capacity. A new local responsive authority, composed of professional education personnel, would participate in the establishment of more carefully defined qualifications (which are delineated by differentiation) and assess teaching performance in terms of the school's objectives. The role of the state will then be limited to student record management and to assessment of the activities and rationale of the school-college combine. (SM)

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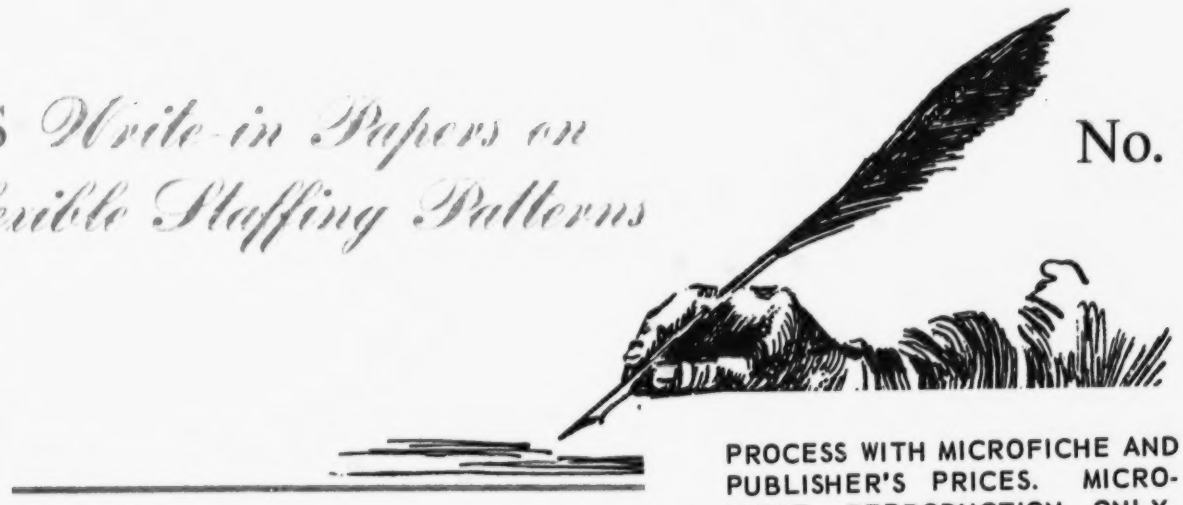

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AN ANCHOR TO WINDWARD

A Framework of State Certification To Accommodate Current Developments in Differentiating Staff Roles

Alvin P. Lierheimer

In a sailboat race, an anchor to windward is used to halt the craft's drift away from the mark. The anchor is quickly recovered when way can be made, even if only in light air, until it needs to be set again.

The various processes of state certification of teachers have moved us far from the original goal of providing assurance to the public that at least a minimal level of teaching competence is possessed by the holder of a certificate. A more contemporary interpretation of the practice of certification could be an anchor to windward and could halt the aimless drift of the present that is taking us far from the original mark.

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1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036

INADEQUACIES OF TODAY'S SCHEME

The most basic shortcoming in a certification scheme built on courses or program completion is that it relates solely to input--what has gone into a teacher's preparation. It does not attest directly to output as one might assume--the teacher's capacity to induce learning on the part of students. Where certification is simply a statement that the holder has completed selected college courses, the public has no assurance about the quality of the courses offered, whether they are known to favorably influence teacher behavior in face-to-face instructional situations with children, or even the level of the teacher's achievement in the courses. Most state certification offices must accept a D grade for a course given by a last-minute, part-time faculty appointee at the "unlibraried" extension center of a marginal, albeit accredited, institution of higher education.

In states where certification is granted on the basis of the prospective teacher's completion of either a state-approved program of preparation or a program approved by a voluntary accrediting association, the public still has little assurance that the academic content and clinical experience are based on a long-term behavioral analysis of on-the-job performance by recent graduates. Neither can the public have confidence that the process of approval or accrediting, however good it seems on paper, was carried out by objective, experienced, and technically competent reviewers.

Further criticism must be aimed at the remoteness of the certification process from the candidate. The issuance of a teaching credential is done without reference to the particular human being but is primarily, if not exclusively,

based on the college course record. Approved-program proponents will protest such criticism by alleging that the candidates they recommend to the state certification office must have personal qualifications deemed appropriate for teaching. But college records show that very few teaching candidates are screened out in the beginning or counseled out in midstream except for those with the most obvious personality disorders. And for the thousands of teachers who achieve a life license to teach children by presenting the cold copy of their college record, there is no place for a competent, candid, close observer to say, "This guy may have the right courses, but he's just not with it!"

These inadequacies are compelling enough in themselves to warrant a change in the certification process, but there are movements developing that suggest a redistribution of certification responsibilities among schools and colleges, state education departments, and professional organizations. Such redistribution compels the exploration of new techniques for administering the responsibilities by whomever shared.

DEVELOPMENTS THAT COMPEL REEXAMINATION

One of the movements that should be taken into account when we talk about who should serve in the education enterprise is that of differentiating, far more explicitly than is done now, the tasks which school personnel perform. Today the typical school staff is differentiated as to teachers, support personnel, and administrators. But sophisticated understandings in each of these categories have ballooned the jobs to almost unmanageable proportions. The teacher must keep up to date academically at all times; stay on top of the latest technological tools, books, aids; be a keen respondent to the emotional needs of the learner; master new strategies for inculcating independence of

thought and critical thinking; take on new curriculum areas that range from sex to the performing arts. The administrator's role is likewise broadening and deepening as the public's expectation and abrasiveness increase. Can one man, as administrator, demonstrate success as a model instructor to his teachers, a perceptive social respondent to the community's youth, a politically astute agent of government to the taxpayer?

The distinctions between the three major existing categories of teachers, support personnel, and administrators are fading. Now, some activities in each category overlap. Some teachers are administratively effective managers of classroom resources, both human and material. Some auxiliary or support personnel demonstrate a type of motivational interaction with students that changes the earlier, passive concept of a teacher aide. Administrators who command admiration in a hostile community are "teachers" in influencing both student and adult attitudes toward education. The concept of a fully differentiated staff envisions an analytical breakdown of the tasks necessary to accomplish the studied and stated educational goals of the school.

Many schools are reexamining the teacher's role and finding that the variety of competencies and tasks expected in today's world are beyond the grasp of a single person, certainly beyond the grasp of the beginning teacher. Children are aided in their learning when they work with a teacher whose responsibilities are realistically limited and where the teacher's assignment reflects recognition of his unique strengths, interests, and specialized preparation.

A number of models are appearing which separate teaching roles. Less appears on the subject of differentiating the

roles of support personnel and administrators. Titles and definitions vary, but experimentation with task and role analysis will continue because of the attractive logic that a differentiated staff offers. As a school staff recognizes, defines, and fulfills differentiated roles, there are benefits to students, to the community, and to the teachers themselves.

Students profit if their learning is managed effectively by persons specifically qualified for their particular needs, whether these be cognitive, affective, or sensory. Students are quick to spot a teacher in over his head and they seldom come to his rescue. But a teacher succeeding in a role that fits his talents and interests radiates success to his pupils.

The community profits from differentiation of teaching roles because new sources of talent can become available, e.g., persons with specialized talents but without full preparation for teaching. For the community there is the attraction, too, that financial support for staff salaries will be divided more discriminatingly. No, not merit pay; pay according to the complexity and demands of new tasks.

School personnel themselves can gain from differentiation as each becomes what he is most capable of becoming and most interested in becoming. Job satisfaction--an essential ingredient in retaining staff--is more likely to be realized when teachers and others perform at levels and in roles in keeping with their desires and talents. Movement within teaching ranks rather than from teaching to administration becomes possible as well as profitable.

A corollary development on the educational scene is the assessment or appraisal of teaching performance. Again, a

variety of prototypes are in developmental stages. But if theoreticians and practitioners in the new centers of educational research continue their activities, there will be a greater number of useful observational records that permit the making of a systematic and critical determination about teaching performance. For example, Robert C. Burkhart (Teacher Learning Center, State University of New York College at Buffalo) is developing a "process inquiry grid" as a framework for identifying mental functions in terms of behavior. Donald M. Medley (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey) is working on the "language of teacher behavior" designed to help teachers develop an understanding of the teaching process.

But more important than the appraisal devices themselves, the appearance of behavioral assessment techniques in a video-taped and computerized world makes imperative some agreement on teaching goals and objectives. What good is a measure of teaching performance without objectively stated criteria which reflect the desired goals of that performance? Less attention has been given to similar techniques for evaluating administrative behavior or the performance of support personnel such as guidance counselors, speech therapists, and social workers. But many of the same techniques for assessing teaching behavior and relating it to training will be useful for the related educational fields.

It will be highly desirable to have the teaching task analyzed appropriately and the components assigned to personnel uniquely equipped by training, experience, and desire to handle them. Similarly, it will be rewarding to have techniques for assessing the degree to which every task is being carried out and the extent to which the educational objectives are being met. But neither differentiating staff

roles nor providing performance assessments in themselves expose the sweet kernel of education--the interpersonal touch without which all else is a lifeless shell. This elusive element breathes reality into every instructional task. The quality of the interpersonal relation makes the total assessment more than the sum of its parts. Academic competence and technological skill count for naught where teachers do not respond with knowledgeable sensitivity to the emotional and psychological needs of children. And how does one measure this ability? Does it not change with the school setting, the personal vagaries of the teacher's emotional and psychological makeup? Yet, we are beginning to learn from the slum school testing ground for teaching that these ill-defined, highly demanding teacher characteristics are a vital if not an overriding concomitant to academic content and pedagogy.

A more remote but no less real concern that stimulates a reexamination of certification theory and practice is the question of federal financing. How long will it continue without increasing pressure to accommodate local practices to federal bureaucratic decisions. The nature of educational progress today is strongly influenced by federal funds, that is, how much money is available and for what purposes. Proposals are quickly written for whatever purposes money is said to be available. Conversely, worthy proposals that do not fit the purposes of available funds are quickly lost. The adage says that he who pays the piper calls the tune. The piper is being paid, but how is his tune chosen? It is a disagreeable prospect to anticipate federal action relative to teacher certification, especially since the states have not done an outstanding job of controlling admission to practice in years past. An even more remote and unwieldy bureaucracy can hardly be expected to exhibit flexibility or creative support.

What, then, shall be our anchor to windward? How can these current developments and persistent concerns be reflected in a more viable arrangement for certifying to the public that practitioners are worthy of their confidence and their support as well as their children? Need we wait until the concepts of behavior assessment and staff differentiation are thoroughly aired and tested before moving to accommodate them? Can't we put out an anchor now while practice becomes established and tested?

REDISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

At present, as mentioned before, certification requirements stipulate completion of courses for formal permission from the state to teach. There is no assurance that the courses are the most pertinent for a particular teacher in a given setting and precious little other than conventional wisdom that relates them to successful intellectual growth by students. Yet, lifelong permission to teach is given on the basis of courses determined by professional consensus but untested as to their effectiveness in achieving stated educational goals. Courses, colleges, and candidates vary, but "the beat goes on" as teachers wearily complain their way through the lackluster offerings of unfeeling professors. Permission to teach might be gained through courses, but it might also be earned through simulation workshops run by professional organizations, seminars, and internships sponsored by groups of school districts, apprentice service in social agencies, pertinent business experience, or other ways. But permission to teach should not be granted -- certainly not a life license -- until teaching performance in a well-defined role has been observed and, to the extent possible, assessed in terms of the school's objectives.

What kind of a framework is needed to redistribute responsibilities among the agencies involved in preparation, i.e., the state department, the schools and colleges in concert, and the professional organizations?

Because the state is legally responsible for education, it has a basic role in the establishment of criteria for teaching service, but this basic role need not extend into such refinements as we find at present where the precise number and nature of courses are identified, albeit one and the same for the English teacher in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, Brooklyn, and in Painted Post, Stueben County, New York. Isn't it sufficiently basic for the state to establish a few categories of short-term permits for entry-level positions?

A permit could be issued for service as an auxiliary, as a teacher, or as an administrator, requiring perhaps high school graduation for the first and a baccalaureate degree with appropriate specialization for the second or third. Even a basic, entry-level, short-term state permit would need to provide for exceptions in which equivalent preparation was offered. If we agree there is no magic in particular courses, neither is there automatic assurance in the completion of a series of courses that culminate in a degree.

This entry-level permit might require, within two years, verification of performance ability in a specified role by persons who have observed the candidate systematically and according to predetermined standards. What does such a dramatic departure from present practice mean? The burden of certification decision making is shifted from a remote and impersonal state agency to a local, informed, and responsive authority. But this is not simply a shift to the already strained shoulders of the school's administrative

officer. A responsible group of professional personnel from schools and colleges would need to participate in the establishment of criteria for the employment and assignment of entry-level applicants in a given school district. If the state requirements were reduced to a bare degree minimum, a school, through the concerted efforts of professional staff and in cooperation with higher education institutions, would screen applicants for their preparation, experience, and fitness for teaching tasks that had been carefully delineated. Few first-year employees would be given full responsibility for a regular class. Probably most candidates would present traditional collegiate backgrounds, but the flexibility would be available for judgments to be made locally, using whatever screening and assessment techniques had been adopted for well-defined tasks in the school.

The differentiation of roles in teaching or in administration is especially appropriate for the transitional induction period, for example, moving from college student of teaching to school teacher of students. Differentiation can create a flexible structure that will permit entrants to assume jobs scaled to their capacity. Novices might move into more complex and demanding roles as assessment determines their readiness for the responsibility. A considerable number of the drownings from the sink-or-swim school of teacher preparation might thus be avoided.

The school-college combine -- a longtime romance shotgunned into marriage by the Education Professions Development Act -- will be the critical determiner of staff roles and performance standards. If the professional organization at the local and other levels accurately represents the membership, not only will practicality prevail, but understanding and support will grow.

A casual arrangement between neighboring school and college will not suffice to develop the behaviorally described roles for staff assignments in the schools and the measures capable of revealing how well the described behaviors are exhibited. For some years yet the attempts in this area will be crude; discouragement and mistakes will lead some to urge a return to more simplistic teacher preparation, certification, and assignment. But neither the world nor its problems become simpler as knowledge increases. The professional associations, together with strong state education departments and government-supported educational laboratories, can provide help to the primary agent of change -- the school-college combine. As the body of experience expands, it needs to be readily available to interested schools through consultants, visits, publications. Special financial help will be needed for the combine to work up specifications and test out early models of differentiated staff roles and ways of assessing their usefulness in the educational process.

The beginning years of a restructured certification framework must be used to gather experience. The change is from a known but inadequate scheme to a dimly seen but realistic promise. Experience must be gained from places willing to try out new patterns and confident enough so that temporary setbacks will spur improved trials rather than counsel withdrawal. As experience is gained, clinical researchers will analyze the elements of success and failure in order to establish new roles and develop improved assessment techniques.

THE STATE'S ROLE

Several modifications in role become appropriate for the state agency. For purposes of mobility, the state's record-

keeping system must provide for the candidate and his future employers a uniform reporting schedule that can reflect local decisions about a candidate's performance. Representative involvement of local districts, higher education institutions, professional organizations, and data-processing design personnel could produce a record-keeping system that would provide uniform reporting of pertinent information even though job descriptions and performance analyses differed among school districts. When a candidate sought employment elsewhere, his permanent record, available from a central state office by phone-computer link, would tell his prospective employer where and how well he performed in a specific type of job.

As a monitor of the educational scene in its own jurisdiction, the state department of education could examine the range of trials at differentiation and assessment as well as the nature and quality of the trials themselves. Despite the encouragement of promised federal funds, for instance, there may not be serious attention by the school-college combine to the role of auxiliary personnel and the necessary training programs for such personnel. While collegiate training may or may not be appropriate for auxiliary personnel, the combine must be interested in the preparation and assignment of such personnel because they significantly and integrally affect the character of the professional staff member's role. Teacher trainers can no more forget about auxiliaries than they can ignore workbooks; indeed, they should influence both.

The state department that is carrying out the overall supervisory responsibility for teacher training will modify its traditional role of approving collegiate programs or evaluating the college transcripts of prospective teachers. The state's concern with individual teachers will be

primarily one of record management. Its concern for programs of preparation will be directed in a helping as well as an assessing manner to the activities of the school-college combine in differentiating roles, preparing personnel for the roles, and assessing their success. The state will use financial inducements as well as persuasive leadership to help the combine carry out its responsibilities. In its assessment role, the state will ask questions of the preparers and the experimenters to elicit the sound rationale that should underly their activities. Not, "Are you offering the courses required for certification?" but, "How did you determine the course work and experience prescription?" Not, "What percentage of full-time staff have professorial rank?" but, "How have you checked the validity of the assessment devices used with persons preparing to teach?"

It is assumed that there will be state and federal support of efforts by the school-college combine to develop more suitable roles for personnel to achieve maximum competence in promoting learning. This teacher-training function by public and private colleges and by the public schools cannot be supported without supplementary financial assistance. But it appears increasingly likely that local support for education will be displaced by virtually total state and federal subsidization.

FEARS AND FRAILTIES

It is easy to dispel any dramatic departure from contemporary practice by inquiring for evidence in support of the new approach. The course-counting approach was instituted almost before the time of thinking man; no one raised the question of evidence then, nor do they raise it now except as a defense mechanism. "Don't give up what

you've got until there's something better that has been proved!" It reminds one of the tycoon who wanted an imaginative breakthrough that had been proved successful. Just by observation, our practice of certification for a uniform teaching task is so absurd that a new approach built on logic and susceptible to development and refinement ought to be preferred.

Other fears about differentiated staffing and the assessment of performance are deeper and more puzzling as we consider local authority in certification for differentiated roles. Many school staffs will be unwilling to assume a judgmental role; many school administrators are not capable of exercising an unbiased judgment; local vocals will try to substitute argumentation and favoritism for independent conclusions based on established performance standards.

Teachers and administrators themselves may not warm to the idea of certifying to the competence of colleagues even in fulfilling tasks which they have helped to develop and which are to be assessed by homegrown measures of adequacy.

Professional resistance to relocating certification authority can be expected if only because it threatens the ego of persons who have come through the unrealistic and simpleminded course-counting approach. "I've done it; why shouldn't they?" Negativism can also be expected because judgments about others can disturb interpersonal relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators. The use of sophisticated observational tools will require learning -- or accepting -- new insights about teaching styles and human character, especially one's own. An experienced teacher will learn, maybe unwillingly, much about himself in the process of learning how to evaluate the performance of others.

The prospect for change from the current pattern of preparation and certification is even more disheartening when one asks how a ghetto community with high hopes for education but with meager staff resources can manage local decisions about an individual's performance. Probably it can't now. Experience has to build models to examine and to adapt. But if the goal of improved teacher-learner relationships is kept in mind, the practices of the present cannot continue to satisfy.

In summary, the certification to the public that a teacher can lead students to learn and grow better than they would without such guidance should reflect our best current understanding of the educational process. Such an attestation must be made by an informed observer of the candidate's teaching in a situation where the task and the objectives have been defined and where the judgment is made by evaluating performance in terms of predetermined goals.

The breadth and complexity of the instructional task exceed the capacity of a single individual. As the jobs to be done are systematically differentiated and made more manageable, the possibility for certifying an individual's competence to perform the task becomes more manageable and more realistic.

To begin a reassignment of responsibility for certification now is an anchor to windward until further refinements make possible progress toward the mark -- that anyone who <u>can</u> teach <u>may</u> teach.

Dr. Lierheimer is Director, Division of Teacher Education and Certification, New York State Education Department.

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The TEPS "write-in" was a concentrated three-day private work session to develop needed literature on new, flexible school staffing patterns. Twenty-six educators from a variety of agencies and schools--people with background in and ideas on school staffing--were called together by the NEA National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards to participate. The papers in this series were selected from among those developed in the write-in.

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